Sonoma County Workshop May 6, 2008, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Finley Community Center Auditorium Santa Rosa, CA

Some 40 people were in attendance. Commissioner Bob Blanchard offered introductory remarks. Participants watched a 12-minute video, and then had the opportunity to answer a series of questions via electronic voting. A discussion followed each question, where participants were able to bring up other issues, questions and concerns.

The Three E's

Vote for top priority among the three E's almost evenly split between Environment, Equity and Economy.

How would you rank these three goals?	R	Responses		
	Count	· Pe	ercentage	
Economy		37	34.58%	
Environment		36	33.64%	
Equity		34	31.78%	
Totals		107	100%	

Maintenance

Which of these should be a higher investment priority for the region's transportation system?	Res Count	sponses Percentage
Option A: making investments to maintain the existing system of roads, and the existing bus, rail and ferry services in the region	21	77.78%
Option B: making investments to build new roads and add more bus, rail and ferry services in the region	6	22.22%
Totals	27	100%

Comments:

- Once the pavement goes, the road deteriorates rapidly and becomes unusable.
- Selected B (making investments to build new roads and add more bus, rail and ferry services) because it included 'invest in new transit'. Does not want new roads, but wants investment in new alternatives made—bike and transit.
- Should be an 'option C' dealing with peak oil- we are now faced with totally different decisions and the question does not reflect that new reality.
- If there is not enough money to maintain the current system, it is inappropriate to build new.
- All ongoing maintenance costs of any new facilities should be considered.
- Need to make investments that make it easier to do the right thing- meaning to use transit.
- Let the roads deteriorate until people can't use them.
- We can't keep expanding. We should phase out the old ways of investing and give people real options.

- You cant' build your way out of congestion- need to invest in bike, walk, transit options.
- Want investments in bike and transit- maintain those systems.
- West County roads are already in horrible condition.
- Want existing roads maintained and new investments in alternative modes.
- Repair old or build new is not as important as making sure the roads connect to activity centers.
- Economy is in bad shape, let's make reasonable plans.
- Need to maintain what we have—we should decide which roads to keep and which roads to drop and let deteriorate.
- Need more of a focus on walking.
- Deal with signals at intersections. Make them more efficient and use new technology.
- Option B (making investments to build new roads and add more bus, rail and ferry services) includes too many things in one pot.

How much of our \$30M should be spent on maintenance?	Responses Count Percentage		
Up to 25% (\$7.5 billion)	14	37.84%	
Up to 50% (\$15 billion)	17	45.95%	
Up to 75% (\$22.5 billion)	6	16.22%	
100% (\$30 billion)	0	0%	
Totals	37	100%	

Congestion Relief

Which of these should be a higher investment priority for the region's transportation system?	Res Count	sponses Percentage
Option A: Investing in highway system to relieve traffic congestion. (For example, ramp metering, high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes.)	4	9.52%
Option B: Investing in public transit options including rail and buses to provide alternatives to driving.	28	66.67%
Option C: Investing in walking paths and bicycle lanes to provide alternatives to driving.	10	23.81%
Totals	42	100%

Those who answered (B) Invest in public transit options including rail and buses.

- Congestion and heavy impacts are due to commuting, so we need to invest in bus and rail options. Bike/ped does not help address commute.
- Need more buses.
- Need increased bus frequency and longer operating hours.
- Rail and buses are the best focus because they will have the biggest impact.
- Major issue for public transit in Sonoma is not having the hours of service people need and not efficiently connecting to other services.
- Most public benefit comes from investing in public transit- both in terms of health and safety.

- Better frequency and hours of service key. Using public transit should be as fast or faster than driving.
- Need continuous HOV lanes so buses can move faster than other traffic.
- Routes in more rural areas too twisty and difficult for buses.

Those who answered (A) Invest in highway system.

• Invest in projects that provide traffic congestion relief on the existing system- increase capacity, add and fix interchanges.

Those who answered (C) Invest in walking paths and bike lanes.

- Bike and ped provide a significant advantage because the maintenance and operating costs of transit are so high. Bike/ped investments are useful forever.
- Want wide, smooth sidewalks and the public will use them.
- Our carbon footprint is currently 11. If you switch to transit, it drops to 9. But if you switch to walking and biking, it drops to 2. That makes C the only alternative.
- When riding your bike, you're always competing with cars and it is dangerous to walk on the streets. Conditions and safety must be improved.
- Build in a 'focused growth' fashion, and then invest in the bike/ped network. Trip lengths must be short enough to make bike/ped a real option.
- Must involve public outreach. Currently, the bus is seen as something for poor people, something that is dangerous. Need to change the public perception of transit.

What do you think is the best way to share the		Responses	
road with trucks?	Count	Percentage	
Keep trucks out of the peak commuter hours	11	29.73%	
Allow smaller trucks to use carpool lanes during congested periods for a fee	1	2.70%	
Encourage more cargo deliveries be made by rail or ferries	25	67.57%	
Build exclusive truck lanes supported by trucking fees	0	0%	
Provide more truck parking in commercial business areas	0	0%	
Totals	37	100%	

Focused growth

Which of these should be a higher investment priority?	Res	ponses
	Count	Percentage
Option A: Providing more transportation funds to communities that are planning to build more housing along BART and other public transit lines	39	90.70%
Option B: Providing transportation funds evenly to communities regardless of where they are planning to build homes	4	9.30%

Totals 43 100%

Comments: Overwhelming support for investing in communities implementing focused growth.

- We're trying to get more people to take transit—need to provide adequate transit. Want growth along SMART corridor and bus corridors.
- Put houses near transit and people will use it.
- Concentrating housing near transit allows more space for parks and open space.
- If we aren't down to zero carbon footprint in 30 years, we're done. We need to change the way the question is framed. What do we need to do to get to zero footprint?
- Should prioritize money towards regional transit systems as well as those that serve particular areas.

Access

Transit Subsidy Based on Income: Transit fare discounts are currently given to youth, seniors, and the disabled. In addition to these subsidies, do you think there should be a subsidy for low-income transit riders?

There should be a subsidy for low income riders.	Responses	
	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	11	27.50%
Agree	15	37.50%
Neutral	10	25%
Disagree	4	10%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Totals	40	100%

I favor basing all transit fare subsidies on income	Responses	
rather than age or disability.	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	5	12.82%
Agree	7	17.95%
Neutral	5	12.82%
Disagree	11	28.21%
Strongly Disagree	11	28.21%
Totals	39	100%

Comments:

- Train riders tend to be different than bus riders. A recent survey of Santa Rosa bus found a very high percentage of riders are low income.
- Let everyone under 30 on free to encourage the next generation to use transit.
- Strongly disagree with the idea of more discounts because it perpetuates the idea that buses are for the poor, elderly and disabled. They should be for everyone.

- Question the practicality of discounts based on income. It is more difficult to check someone's income than their age or disability.
- Look at precedents in other areas- in Sacramento, discounts have led to a very different clientele during the midday hours and the buses don't always feel safe.
- With the high cost of housing, people drive until they can afford housing. It is not effect to give discounts to low income because the poor are not living close to high-grade transit.
- London example- a number of years ago they made the tube free. Ridership soared. So little of our operating costs are covered by fares, why not make it free?

Emissions Reduction

Which of these should be a higher investment priority?	Res	Responses	
	Count	Percentage	
Option A: Focusing on reducing tailpipe emissions and encouraging alternatives to driving.	41	95.35%	
Option B: Improving our ability to drive more easily around the Bay Area.	2	4.65%	
Totals	43	100%	

Which programs do you think are most effective to reduce the amount of CO2 emissions?	Res Count	ponses Percentage
Subsidize purchase of newer/cleaner vehicles	4	10.26%
Provide more/cheaper public transit	13	33.33%
Develop regional awareness campaign to encourage people to reduce fossil fuel use	2	5.13%
Build more bike paths and sidewalks	5	12.82%
Funding incentives to cities to allow more development near transit	14	35.90%
Support local traffic signal timing coordination	1	2.56%
Totals	39	100%

Comments: Investments to reduce emissions

- Rail, trains
- Hybrids
- Living close to railroad stations and bike trails
- Decrease the amount of fuel sold in the state by one third.
- Make public transit really attractive change the perception that it is only for the poor.
- More and cheaper public transit in needed.
- Give money to encourage focused growth development patterns.
- Change the design of signals to reduce idling and congestion.

Investment Tradeoffs

You have \$10 - Click each number once for each	Responses	
dollar you want to spend.	Count	Percentage
Maintenance	53	13.70%
Congestion Relief	47	12.14%
Focus Growth	110	28.42%
Access	57	14.73%
Emissions Reduction	120	31.01%
Totals	387	100%

Comments that question is too ambiguous; the questions should be more focused.

New Revenues

Now that we've done the budget, would you favor	Responses	
pursuing new revenues to increase the budget?	Count	Percentage
Yes	37	90.24%
No	4	9.76%
Totals	41	100%

Which of the following new revenue sources would you support? (Multiple answers OK)	Res Count	sponses Percentage
Regional gas fee	30	21.58%
Higher bridge toll	18	12.95%
Road tolls	23	16.55%
Vehicle registration fees	29	20.86%
County transportation sales taxes	19	13.67%
Other new revenues	19	13.67%
No new fees or increases	1	0.72%
Totals	139	100%

Comments:

- Add new train service riders will pay and that will generate new revenues.
- Gas taxes
- Transportation fund for climate change
- Congestion pricing
- Peak fees
- End the reduced vehicle registration fees
- Do away with free parking
- Go to the federal government for money
- Auction off rights to put emissions in the air

- Congestion pricing and toll roads
 Restore purchasing power of the gas tax and index it

Open Comments

County	Category	Comment
Sonoma	Alternatives to auto	Plan should acknowledge that most trips are not work trips.
	for short trips	Focus on making transit, bike or walking reasonable
		options for the short non-work trips that are the majority of
		trips.
Sonoma	Alternatives to auto	Make alternative transportation attractive and people will
		get out of their cars.
Sonoma	Bike	Bike focus more money to Safe Routes to School to get
		the younger generation thinking about alternatives and
		reduce all the cars idling outside schools.
Sonoma	Public Transit	Increase and improve public transportation.
Sonoma	Public Transit	Make transit a choice, not a necessity.
Sonoma	Bike	Invest in bike facilities.
Sonoma	Bike	Secure bike parking will improve and facilitate bike use.
Sonoma	Alternatives to auto	There is a great deal of frustration- people want to do the
	– viable alt's to auto	right thing. They want to use alternative forms of
		transportation. But they can't. There are not viable transit
		options that get you to your destination in a reasonable
		time.
Sonoma	Alternatives	People need more choices.
Sonoma	Employer assistance	Need programs that encourage businesses to reward
	with alt's to auto	employees to drive less. Also need facilities at offices to
		enable biking to work (showers, bike parking, etc).
Sonoma	Alternatives to auto -	People think driving is faster. Need transit or alternatives to be faster.
Sonoma	Roads – manage	Organize and manage road work more efficiently. Should
Donoma	repairs efficiently	set tighter deadlines and better utilize work crews.
Sonoma	Planning process	The planning process should be more inclusionary of
Bonoma	Training process	groups that live in the local areas.
Sonoma	Don't ignore roads	People still want to drive so we do need roads. We can't
Sonoma	Rail (SMART)	ignore them completely. The #1 investment priority in the North Bay is SMART.
		We want MTC to consider paying for SMART should the
		next sales tax vote fail. Also want MTC to join others in
		advocating the Legislature to reduce the percentage vote
		required to approve a tax needed for necessary
		infrastructure projects from two-thirds vote to 51%.
Sonoma	Employer assistance	City and County should get other businesses to help pay
	with alt's to auto	employees to take transit.
Sonoma	Rail	America needs a rail revolution. Oil may very well be in
		decline. Must face that reality.
Sonoma	Focused growth	Build developments so that people have a 5-mile radius to
		get to their jobs and needs- that will make walking a viable

		option. Develop following the old European pre-petroleum model.
Sonoma	Rail (SMART)	SMART is needed. It is less expensive than any other
		system.
Sonoma	Commuter rail	MTC is wasting money on the BART extension to San
	versus BART	Jose. Should put money in to a commuter rail on the same system.
Sonoma	Alternatives to auto	MTC is moving too slowly. By 2035 we need a no fossil
	 depleted fuel 	system or nothing else we do will matter.
Sonoma	Public Transit – bus	Build BRT in the North Bay rather than rail. It has a higher
	rapid transit	chance of being approved, is cheaper to build, and more
		flexible.
Sonoma	Public Transit	Get youth used to using public transportation.
Sonoma	Climate protection	MTC needs to accelerate the shift to focusing on climate
		change.
Sonoma	Bike parking	Bikes are stolen too frequently. Have bike lockers at all
		businesses and residential developments.
Sonoma	Bikes – Safe Routes	Make a network of Safe Routes to School so kids can bike
	to School	and walk.
Sonoma	Bike parking	Want more secured bike parking.
Sonoma	Gas tax increase	Convince the Legislature to increase the gas tax and index
		it to inflation.
Sonoma	Focused growth	Focused growth- increase densities.
Sonoma	Public Transit –	We need to reduce VMT, which requires an emphasis on
	reduce VMT	train and bus investments.

Written Comments Submitted at Workshop:

Sonoma County Workshop 5/6/08	There is need to change traffic management at intersections. Present traffic signal operations contribute to congestion and pollution. Excessive use of "wait-for-arrow" signals disrupt transit bus operations and contribute to global greenhouse gases. Also, signals induce the use of motorized traffic rather than walking or bicycling. I am willing to put up with more stop signs on lower traffic routes.
	The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends in their Manual on Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) the use of stop signs and/or roundabouts as alternatives. The FHWA is recommending a new signal with a flashing yellow arrow that allows turning on the round green (yielding to oncoming and pedestrians). This signal needs to be implemented area wide (TETAP perhaps?)
	Signal needs to be removed from high-speed expressways on the following routes and replaced with interchanges: 1) Hwy. 37 between Route 101 and Mare Island 2) Hwy. 29 between Trancas Ave in Napa and Hwy. 37 in Vallejo 3) Hwy. 12 between I-80 and the eastern edge of Suisun City/Fairfield urban area
	Attached letter to MTC, letter to Sonoma County Transportation Authority, and excerpt from California MUTCD.

	Sonoma County Workshop 5/6/08	The Local Government Commission has promulgated the Ahwahnee Principles for Resource Efficient Communities and complementary Economic Development and Water Resource Principles. These Draft "Ahwahnee Principles for Climate Change" will, if adopted by communities in the spirit of AB 32, help to achieve 4 of the 5 investment priorities of MTC: congestion relief, focused growth; access; and emissions reduction. I commend these to your attention.
	Sonoma County 5/6/08	Use the same questions yet use only the ones that affect each county. Example: Sonoma does not have BART or Caltrain.
	Sonoma County Workshop 5/6/08	Take GHG more seriously. Turn regular lanes into HOV lanes. HOT lanes won't work in the North Bay. Subsidize taxicabs so more people can do without a car more often. Do away with free parking. Plan with the assumption that much less fuel will be available: Safe Routes to Schools; Rent a Bike systems. Have every public official ride transit weekly. Locate hospitals and schools downtown. When SMART tax passes, provide capital funding for electrification.
	Sonoma County 5/6/08	Bicycle and pedestrian facilities offer greatest return on investment and require least maintenance. Concentrate on re-allocating existing street space. Charge for all auto parking!
	Sonoma County Workshop 5/6/08	Build a bus rapid transit guideway along the North Bay railroad right-of-way. Get youngsters acquainted w/ public transportation; part of K-12 education. Use congestion pricing. Complete HOV network along the 101 corridor in North Bay.
	Sonoma County 5/6/08	Increased elderly population who will not be allowed to drive requires more frequent bus and rail systems.
General	Sonoma County 5/6/08	I find this very informative.
	Sonoma County Workshop 5/6/08	Investment in bicycle infrastructure — bike lanes, paths, secure parking and especially bike lockers — will increase ridership. 11.8% of all trips are made by pedestrians or cyclists yet only 1% of transportation funds is allocated to bike/ped uses.
		Please fund the regional bike/ped program (71% of all Bay Area residents live within 1 mile of the network) adopted in 2001. \$40 million per year for the next 25 years.
		Please fund Safe Routes to Transit and Safe Routes to Schools for \$10 million a year for 25 years.
		Please set aside \$500 million for the Bay Area Bridge Access for bikes and peds.
		These four programs address every MTC goal for Climate Protection and Clean Air, improve health and safety and social equity.
		I also second the idea promoted during the meeting to help fund the SMART train and give up on the BART extension to San Jose; replace that with light rail.
	Sonoma County Workshop 5/6/08	Create a regional Safe Routes to School Program. Extend Safe Routes to Transit Program. Strengthen complete streets/routine accommodation policies. Fund bicycle/pedestrian projects locally. Expand budget to build bike/ped projects.

	Staff a full-time bike/ped planner for MTC. Increase funding for Bike-to-Work Day. Increase street skills for cyclists program. Expand professional Best Practices Trainings. Use standard bike/ped data collection. Conduct regional travel surveys every 5 years. Perform regular collision analyses to pinpoint hazards. Capture short-distance bicycle and walking trips.
Sonoma County Worksho 5/6/08	Secured bicycle parking at Santa Rosa Junior College, high schools, junior and middle schools. Secured bicycle parking downtown cities – Class 1 bike lockers. Walk & Roll to School Day should be every Wednesday and Friday for a full month. Provide course Marshalls, bike sacks. Staff a full time bike/ped planner at MTC Perform regular standardize bicycle and pedestrian data collection throughout the region in order to build bicycle and pedestrian commute. Street skills for cyclists program as a curriculum in the public schools.
Sonoma County Worksho 5/6/08	Expand Regional Bicycle and Ped account to \$1 billion dollars and accelerate building of Regional Bike Network. Need enhanced Safe Routes to School programs funded at \$10 million per year. Need better secure bike parking. If possible bike lanes, pedestrian paths on the Bay Area bridges. There should be a full-time MTC bike/ped person. More express buses connecting major cities are needed. Spare the Air days should also encourage bike use.
Sonoma County Worksho 5/6/08	Transit-oriented development related to rail lines – BART, Caltrain, San Jsoe light rial, SMART, Muni — this is the major new direction we must go. Cities on these lines must upzone and redevelop to have attractive transit cores. Streets must be redeveloped, too. Better street design is necessary to avoid added mileage. Drivers Education in high school should be changed to "Transportation Ed" to include bicycle and transit skills. MTC seems to have a significant outreach budget. Put some into education of the broad public.
Sonoma County Worksho 5/6/08	Public transportation is of vital importance to the economy, as insurance that enables a variety of shift workers to work fruitfully. MTC oversees the public transit in northern California. There should be funds allocated to finance and coordinate better transportation in Sonoma County. With three separate bus systems (Santa Rosa CityBus, Petaluma City Transit and Sonoma County Bus) there are three separate pots of gold in one county. Things can't wait until 2030. Current routes and schedules do not accommodate. Sonoma County is not meeting requirements of the Federal Law and changes should begin NOW. What should be done? Save taxpayers' dollars and help residents. Have ONE system and eliminate routes that overlap. There would be ONE schedule booklet and ONE map (w/magnified portions of each city) showing all bus stops. The general public suffers from the independence of three different bus systems. ONE county bus supervisor should oversee and coordinate the managers of each city. Routes should run later.

Demographic Questions asked at Workshop:

1.) How did you get here this evening?	Responses	
		_
Drove	29	74.36%
BART/Muni/Bus	1	2.56%
Carpool	3	7.69%
Bike	4	10.26%
Walked	2	5.13%
Totals	39	100%

2.) How long did it take you to get here?	Responses	
Less than five minutes	3	7.89%
Five to 10 minutes	11	28.95%
Ten to 30 minutes	15	39.47%
More than 30 minutes	9	23.68%
Totals	38	100%

3.) How would you describe yourself?	Responses	
Business Advocate	3	4.17%
Environmental Advocate	19	26.39%
Community Advocate	17	23.61%
Government/Agency Staff	8	11.11%
Concerned Individual	19	26.39%
Social Justice Advocate	4	5.56%
Elected Official	2	2.78%
Totals	72	100%

4.) How did you hear about tonight's meeting? Responses Flyer 12.82% 5 Website 7.69% 3 Email 28 71.79% Other 3 7.69% Totals 39 100%

5.) Do you use public transportation regularly? (one to two times a week)	Responses	
Yes	9	23.68%
No	29	76.32%
Totals	38	100%

6.) Have you attended a public meeting or
workshop on Bay Area transportation in the
nast?

past?	Respo	Responses	
Yes	24	63.16%	
No	14	36.84%	
Totals	38	100%	

7.) What County do you live in?	Respoi	nses
Alameda	1	2.63%
Contra Costa	1	2.63%
Marin	1	2.63%
Napa	0	0%
San Francisco	1	2.63%
San Mateo	0	0%
Santa Clara	1	2.63%
Solano	0	0%
Sonoma	33	86.84%
Totals	38	100%

8.) what is your gender?	Respoi	Responses	
Male	27	72.97%	
Female	10	27.03%	
Totals	37	100%	

9.) Are you Hispanic/Latino?	Responses	
Yes	5	14.29%
No	30	85.71%
Totals	35	100%

10.) How do you identify yourself (click all that apply) Responses White 34 85% Chinese 1 2.50% Vietnamese 0 0% Asian/Indian 0 0% Black/African American 0 0% Japanese 1 2.50% Filipino 1 2.50% American Indian/Alaskan 0 0% Other Asian 0 0% Other Race 3 7.50% **Totals** 40 100%

11.) What is your age?	Responses	
24 years and under	2	5.56%
Between 25 and 59	18	50%
Over 60	16	44.44%
Totals	36	100%

Meeting Evaluation Questions Asked at Workshops:

37.) I had the opportunity to provide comments.	Responses	
Strongly Agree	19	50%
Agree	18	47.37%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.63%
Totals	38	100%

38.) I found the meeting useful and informative.	Responses	
Strongly Agree	1	11.43%
	21	60%
Agree	21	
Neutral	9	25.71%
Disagree	1	2.86%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Totals	35	100%

39.) I gained a better understanding of other people's perspectives. Responses 7 17.95% Strongly Agree Agree 20 51.28% Neutral 9 23.08% Disagree 2.56% 1 Strongly Disagree 5.13% **Totals** 39 100%

40.) The information presented was clear and had an appropriate level of detail.	Responses	
	<u> </u>	
Strongly Agree	1	2.56%
Agree	23	58.97%
Neutral	10	25.64%
Disagree	4	10.26%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.56%
Totals	39	100%

41.) A quality discussion of key issues took	
place.	Responses

Totals	39	100%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	8	20.51%
Neutral	10	25.64%
Agree	19	48.72%
Strongly Agree	2	5.13%

42.) I learned more about transportation

planning in the Bay Area by participating tonight.		Responses	
Strongly Agree	2	5.41%	
Agree	17	45.95%	
Neutral	12	32.43%	
Disagree	5	13.51%	
Strongly Disagree	1	2.70%	
Totals	37	100%	

43.) There were no barriers (language or other) that prevented me from participating.

that prevented me from participating.	Respor	nses
Strongly Agree	22	57.89%
Agree	15	39.47%
Neutral	1	2.63%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Totals	38	100%